

# Star-News Bidder Holds Staunch Conservative Views

In the latest development in the contest between liberal Texas banker Joe L. Allbritton and conservative Michigan publisher John P. McGoff to determine which man ultimately will emerge as the owner of the Washington *Star-News* (see HUMAN EVENTS, Jan. 18, 1975, page 4), Allbritton and Star Communications, the paper's parent firm, last week filed a response with the Federal Communications Commission to the earlier petition filed jointly by McGoff and Concerned Citizens for Balance in News Media, a Washington-area citizens' group.

As previously reported, Allbritton is seeking a waiver from an FCC regulation that would forbid him from acquiring control of television and AM-FM broadcasting stations in the same city. Allbritton maintains that without the revenues generated by both broadcasting properties, it would be impossible to continue publishing the *Star-News*. But McGoff, who seeks to purchase only the newspaper, disagrees and points out that he would not be offering to purchase the newspaper alone if he did not believe it was economically feasible.

In a telephone interview, McGoff charged last week that Allbritton is already violating FCC regulations by quieting "controlling those [broadcasting] operations without the authority to do so."

Even more important, according to McGoff, is Allbritton's failure, in his original petition before the FCC, to explain certain of his business operations in 1971 that might possibly have been an elaborate attempt to disguise contributions to the presidential primary campaign of Sen. Edmund S. Muskie (D.-Maine.).

"I think the real story is Allbritton's operations that related to Muskie," the Midwestern newspaper publisher told HUMAN EVENTS. "That's his white elephant, let me tell you. If he wants to play some Watergate, we'll play it, too."

At a January 8 news conference in Washington, McGoff described himself for reporters as a "moderate conservative." In order to find out just how conservative McGoff really is, HUMAN EVENTS questioned the Michigan publisher on a number of key political issues. The interview proceeded as follows:

**Q.** What do you think about the proposed Consumer Protection Agency? Do you remember that one?

**A.** Yes, frankly, I think we've had enough agencies of government interference to prove their objections, and I think EPA [the Environmental Protection Agency] is a classic example. Their ideas have done nothing but hurt the American free enterprise system.

**Q.** How about the guaranteed annual income concept, sometimes known as the Family Assistance Plan or FAP?

one run a business if people are paid for not working?

**Q.** National health insurance?

**A.** Absolutely against it.

**Q.** What about aid to South Vietnam?

**A.** Well, of course, I was a supporter of our goals in South Vietnam as long as they took off the political shackles and permitted us to win a military victory. And of course what is now happening is that the billions of dollars and thousands of lives that we lost are for nought because they [the Communists] are moving in and doing what they were going to do in the first place—that is, the North Vietnamese and the support they get from China and the Soviet Union. We have a moral obligation to continue to support them there, if nothing else.

**Q.** How important do you think it is for the federal government to have a balanced budget?

**A.** Well, I don't see why a federal or state government should have an opportunity of operating in any manner different from that of a family. If a country can continue to run heavy deficits, you're not going to survive.

And you know, it's gotten to the point where we look upon federal budgets as purely academic, as though it doesn't mean anything. Now, I'm not convinced of that. If we look at what has happened to us as it relates to inflation and devaluation of the dollar, we've got to realize that the basic reason for that is that we haven't operated within a balanced budget for years. I'm all for [Secretary of the Treasury William] Simon on his fight on that one.

**Q.** What about federal land-use legislation?

**A.** Well, on the land-use issue, I happen to be involved with an outfit called "Operation Action UP," which stands for the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. We're having a hell of a battle with the Department of Natural Resources in this state, which is trying to grab off land, take it off the tax rolls, and have it come under the control of the state for the use of the general public in recreation development. You know you can go a little too far on that sort of thing.

And the federal government in this state has control of much of the land in the Upper Peninsula, and if we're going to make the Upper Peninsula—I'm talking about the State of Michigan now—totally economically viable, a place where people want to live and want to work, then we have to permit free enterprise to be able to make use of the land, whether it's for mining or for logging or what have you.

**Q.** Which is more important to you: your conservatism or your Republicanism?

**A.** Let me say this: I am deeply concerned about the direction of the Republican party. I've stated this publicly, that when election day comes, I don't know who to vote for, because I have no choice. I have no opportunity to say: This guy's political philosophy is one that I like because he has some basic philosophy that I share with him on the issues.